



**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:**  
**1 SEPTEMBER 2026**

**LEICESTERSHIRE MUSIC OVERVIEW REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

**Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about the work of Leicestershire Music and how it links to wider areas including education, advocacy and profile raising for music education. The report will share data about latest achievements and impact as well as explain the funding and governance set up of Leicestershire Music as the Lead organisation for the Leicestershire Music Hub.

**Background**

2. Founded in 1948, Leicestershire Music (LM) is the lead partner of the Leicestershire Music Hub (LMH). It provides countless young people in Leicester and Leicestershire the opportunity to access to a high quality and inclusive music education. In 2024, LM was established as the Hub Lead Organisation for Leicester and Leicestershire, implementing the National Plan for Music Education (NPME) through a needs based Local Plan for Music Education (LPME).
3. Through a central workforce and variety of partnerships (including schools) LMH enables children and young people from all backgrounds in Leicester and Leicestershire to 'Enrich and connect their world through life changing musical experiences.'
4. LM's leadership is strengthened and supported by an independent Hub Board and Leicestershire County Council (Children and Family Services) to ensure that the organisation continues to move forward and grow and develop in line with the ever-changing needs of the communities it serves.

**Funding**

5. LMH is awarded two ring-fenced grants:
  - the revenue grant, which is core funding to co-ordinate and support the delivery of music education provision through a Hub partnership in line with the vision, aims and strategic functions for Hubs as set out in the NPME.
  - the capital grant, which is funding to increase the volume, range, relevance and accessibility of musical instruments, equipment and technology in the Hub area.

6. The revenue grant has been confirmed as static for academic year 2026-27 (£1.4 million). The grant has only increased by 4.61% between 2015-16 & 2026-27.
7. Had the grant kept pace with inflation, the 2026-27 allocation of £1.4m would have been worth £1.9m (£0.5m / 35.4% higher) .
8. Local Government pay awards and National Insurance increases add on average £120k per annum to the LM wage bill, which is funded by the grant.
9. A Fundraising Strategy is in place and there has been a greater emphasis in the last 2 years in income generation through both traded activity and fundraising.

### Delivery

10. To help drive forward its ambitions, LMH has a carefully thought-out vision for the musical future of our children and young people in Leicester and Leicestershire and fully embraces the objectives and recommendations of the NPME. In particular, LM is committed to:
  - providing an inclusive, diverse, and engaging music education and recognise that music education plays a vital role in developing creativity, cognitive skills, social connections, and overall well-being.
  - delivering high-quality music education programmes which will be achieved by investing in the continuous professional development of music educators, fostering partnerships with local schools and cultural organisations, and regularly evaluating the impact and effectiveness of our work.

### **Alignment with Children & Families Priorities**

#### Inclusion and SEND

11. LM delivers bespoke projects in SEND schools and offers support to SEND settings, aligning with the council's focus on special needs. LM lead on the Award winning 'Uprising' programme which is training specialist teachers in SEND Music delivery.

#### Well-being & Personal Development

12. Music ensembles foster mental health and social benefits, supporting early help priorities. 2025-26 saw the introduction of SEMH focused music delivery assisting with improvements in attendance and well-being of young people at risk of exclusion.

#### Partnership & Outreach

13. LM works with schools (93% of all schools across Leicester and Leicestershire in 2025-26 academic year), community groups, and LMH partners to broaden access and ensure equity of access.

### **Partnerships**

14. LM has strong partnerships with schools, local organisations, national organisations and community groups. These partnerships enable equitable access to music education and mean that the offer is broad and diverse. Partners include Pedestrian,

Soft Touch Arts, Cosmopolitan Arts, Bullfrog Arts, The Philharmonia, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, National Youth Jazz Orchestra and Orchestras Live. Partnership agreements are in place and are reviewed annually and partners successfully use Hub grant money to leverage further funding and share data about the impact of their work. Examples of this kind of work can be seen here:

- National Youth Jazz Orchestra:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvRQnnVuYm0&feature=youtu.be>
- Leics Connect Music Industry Careers Programme:  
<https://youtu.be/0xm1Kr0YjBU?si=-oVCgtYysWt7nedv>

## **Schools**

15. LM's school team fosters relationships with all state-funded schools in Leicester and Leicestershire and support them to deliver high-quality music education, including a quality curriculum support offer and CPD programme, specialist tuition, instruments and group playing activities, and a broad range of progression routes and musical experiences for all pupils. A team of music leaders go in and deliver as well as schools having the opportunity to come to various performance venues across the city and county to see and take part in live music performances.
16. Overall school engagement in 2025-26 was at 93%. The national average for the same period was 92%.

## **Progression and Musical Development**

17. LM focusses on individualised progression pathways for young musicians, enabling them to develop their skills and pursue music education at all levels. This will involve collaborations with a range of diverse partners, professional musicians, and industry experts to provide guidance, mentorship and performance opportunities. This has developed significantly over the past two years with the introduction of a peripatetic one-to-one and small group teaching team, new beginner music ensembles and a team of 'casual' music leaders who have been essential in delivery of progression opportunities to young people from a variety of backgrounds and especially in an out of school setting.

## **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA)**

18. LM is committed to delivering an inclusive and welcoming environment for Music Education, performances, training, and developing opportunities to all, where anyone can positively explore their musical talents and passion safely.
19. LM's Inclusion Policy is in the process of being rewritten following key member of the team receiving training on the 'Flourish' course which looks at the Youth Music IDEA framework to identify the needs LM has. At its heart is our ambition:

"At Leicestershire Music, we believe that excellence and inclusion are not mutually exclusive; they are mutually reinforcing. Every child and young person should have access to music education, regardless of their background, identity, location, ability, socio-economic circumstances or prior musical experience.

20. We recognise that an inclusive music service is one that actively removes barriers, values diverse perspectives, reflects the communities it serves and creates equitable opportunities for participation, progression and leadership.”

### **What's Working Well**

21. The current performance data 2025-26 is as follows:
- 93 % of all schools in Leicester and Leicestershire have been supported in their music education – via Continuing Professional Development (CPD), School Music Development Plans, performance Opportunities and Music Teaching
  - 82% of all schools took part in a singing opportunity – including CPD, massed choirs and choir competitions
  - 21.6% of all pupils taking part in LM activity are from a disadvantaged background (PP and/or SEND)
  - In total LM worked with over 18000 students in schools alone
  - Pupils performed at Haymarket Theatre, De Montfort Hall and The Venue, De Montfort University, Leicester's Riverside Festival, Leicester Music Conference and national Music Mark conference
  - Media coverage included interviews on BBC Radio Leicester and ITV News
  - LM launched it's Alumni scheme which attracted donations and sponsorship for disadvantaged students to be able to access music education
  - Youth Music funded the careers programme to the value of £30,000

### **Key Challenges**

22. The key challenges which have been identified are:
- Ongoing local Pay Award forecasts an £120k per annum increase to the LM wage bill which has to be found from grant funding money
  - 2026-27 funding has been confirmed as static meaning in real terms LM will be receiving less year on year since 2015
  - Income generation is reliant on schools and families purchasing traded goods which nationally there is a decline in due to cost of living and competing educational priorities
  - National Centre for Music Education due to start in September 2026 – the body responsible for the delivery of this will also manage the National Music Hubs programme so potentially some changes in grant management and expectations
  - Remaining inclusive and relevant adapting to changing needs and interests of young people with a fit for purpose workforce – workforce development plan will need to be a key focus going forwards
  - LMH serves both Leicester and Leicestershire meaning under Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), LM will likely be picking up additional work (schools changing authorities and the possibility of the addition of Rutland whose Music Education funding currently comes under Northamptonshire Music Hub)

### **Future Plans and Development**

23. The following plans have been formulated in order to develop the Service:

- To deliver a Music and Wellbeing (Sound Minds) project over a three-year period focusing on prevention, partnering with other services such as children's mental health and therapy.
- To deliver music tuition in all Oakfield schools for the academic year 2026-27 – signalling a significant commitment to music for the young people that attend these settings. It has also enabled some growth in delivery staff with recruitment taking place for these roles.
- 'Musician in Residence' programme to continue to be rolled out following pilot year - Music Leaders will spend more time in one school fostering relationships, enabling progression for young musicians and creating a musical culture within a school. This will enable better long-term prospects for young musicians and has positive sustainability impacts with lesser travel for music leaders
- First ever Impact Report focussing on the outcomes for children and young people will be published and shared and used as part of fundraising awareness and advocacy.
- Leicester Music Board work continues to grow with a 2027 Young Person's Music Careers Conference and careers programme in planning
- Performance opportunities for young people in 2026-27 include Haymarket Theatre, De Montfort Hall, The Venue, side by sides with The Philharmonia Orchestra, Leicester's Riverside Festival and Brewbeat Festival as well as open mic nights hosted by PPL PRS Ltd.
- Workforce development to improve inclusive nature of music teaching and implement new Inclusion strategy.
- To streamline Communication and Marketing messages to improve reach to parents with regards to improving numbers in group music making. To include communicating the wider benefits of music education on young people's social, emotional and mental wellbeing.

### **Background papers**

The Power of Music to Change Lives: National Plan for Music Education:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62bc1242d3bf7f292040d364/The\\_Power\\_of\\_Music\\_to\\_Change\\_Lives.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62bc1242d3bf7f292040d364/The_Power_of_Music_to_Change_Lives.pdf)

National Music Hub Data Dashboard:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrJoiMmY0MDg5ZGMtMGYwNi00Zjk3LTk3NTQtOWZmNmRkYzZIOTNiliwidCI6ImM3YTZmYzMyLTc1MzgtNGlwZS1hOTZhLTA1Zjg1NTAwN2MxMSJ9>

Young people to benefit from creative education boost:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/young-people-to-benefit-from-creative-education-boost>

Leicestershire Music website:

<https://leicestershiremusichub.org/>

### **Equalities Implications**

24. There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

**Human Rights Implications**

25. There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

**Officer to Contact**

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